

# Operations update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## China: Sichuan Earthquake

Emergency appeal n° MDRCN003  
GLIDE n° [EQ-2008-000062-CHN](#)  
Operations update n° 4  
20 May 2008

**Period covered by this Update:** Five days after the launch of appeal.

**Appeal target (current):** CHF 20,076,412 (USD 19,304,242 or EUR 12,431,215);

[<click here to view the attached Revised Emergency Appeal Budget>](#)

**Appeal coverage:** There has been a very generous and quick response to this appeal, and in the four days since it was launched, many pledges of funding have been received, and the initial appeal target is already covered. The appeal will be revised after further assessments have taken place, and after the Red Cross Society of China has drawn up its plan of action, including International Federation support.

[<click here to link to a map of the affected areas; or here for contact details >](#)

### Appeal history:

- This Emergency Appeal was launched on 15 May 2008 for CHF 20,076,412 (USD 19.3 million or EUR 12.4 million) for 12 months to assist 100,000 beneficiaries.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF): CHF 250,000 was allocated from the International Federation's DREF to support the Red Cross Society of China's response to the earthquake.

**Summary:** As of 20 May, the death toll from the massive earthquake which struck the south-western province of Sichuan has risen to a total of 34,073 and 245,108 injured, according to the emergency response office under the State Council. Of this figure, 33,570 deaths occurred in Sichuan alone with the rest in seven other provinces and municipalities - Gansu, Shaanxi, Chongqing, Yunnan, Shanxi, Guizhou and Hubei. On 20 May, as many as 7,000 aftershocks were recorded in Sichuan. Of these 7,000, 156 were above a magnitude of four, 25 above a magnitude of five, and the largest one at 6.1. So far, 233,810 people have been injured in Sichuan alone, and an estimated 14,000 still buried under the rubble. Some 15.7 million rooms have been damaged and six million others have collapsed (respectively, approximately 5.2 million homes damaged and two million homes



Lunchtime means instant noodles in a tent shared by members of an extended family. Sho Huang/International Federation

collapsed<sup>1</sup>). The government expects the death toll to surpass 50,000. The earthquake has left over 4.8 million people homeless.

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) headquarters, along with its Sichuan branch and many other provincial branches of RCSC, have been providing non-stop assistance to those in the affected areas. By 20 May, RCSC headquarters had mobilized eight medical teams, two psychosocial counselling teams, 23 relief vehicles, over 200 staff from other provinces, and 31 rescue and relief teams from other Red Cross branches to Sichuan. The Sichuan Red Cross branch has dispatched 17 medical teams to Pengzhou, Beichuan, Dujiangyan, Anxian, Mianzhu, Shifang and Pingwu to treat over 2,000 seriously injured people. The Sichuan Red Cross branch also sent 43 Red Cross teams consisting of 400 staff to provide assistance to those affected by the disaster. Altogether over 35,000 Red Cross staff and volunteers are assisting in the relief effort.

The executive vice-president of RCSC arrived in Chengdu on 19 May. Her arrival will further encourage Red Cross staff and volunteers, and help to clarify overall relief coordination in Sichuan.

As of 18 May, the RCSC headquarters and its branches have received more than CNY 2.9 billion (CHF 436.6 million) in donations, fundraised nationally and internationally, in cash and in kind. Some CNY 650 million (CHF 97.8 million) has so far been spent by the RCSC on emergency relief items in the disaster-affected areas. In Sichuan, over 800,000 survivors have received relief items from the Red Cross. Over 200 Red Cross trucks transport relief items on a daily basis and over 500 Red Cross volunteers are involved in providing logistics support and psychosocial counselling.

The International Federation set up an earthquake coordination office in Sichuan province on 18 May, and will provide emergency support to the RCSC relief operations in Mianyang prefecture, one of the most affected prefectures. Tents, quilts, winter clothing, kitchen sets and other relief items are being sent from within China by the International Federation to Mianyang.

Many partner national societies have made contributions to the appeal: American Red Cross, British Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross/Canadian government, Netherlands Red Cross/Netherlands government, New Zealand Red Cross/New Zealand government, United Arab Emirates Red Crescent Society, with other contributions in the pipeline, including those from Belgian Red Cross/Belgian government, German Red Cross/German government and Japanese Red Cross/Japanese government. The International Federation, on behalf of the Red Cross Society of China, would like to thank all partners for their very quick and generous response to this appeal.

## The situation

As of 20 May, the death toll from the powerful earthquake which hit southwest China's Sichuan province has risen to 33,570, with 233,810 injured and 5,260 buried in that province alone, according to the information office of the state council. According to the ministry of health, as of 20 May, a total of 52,934 people have been treated in hospitals, 7,979 people discharged after receiving treatment and 3,304 who had died in hospitals.

According to the emergency response office of the State Council, the magnitude 8 (as revised by the government from the original 7.8 magnitude) earthquake of 12 May has caused 4.8 million people to be displaced<sup>2</sup> in eight provinces and municipalities including Sichuan (the province most severely affected), Gansu, Shaanxi, Chongqing, Yunnan, Shanxi, Guizhou and Hubei. Some 15.7 million rooms have been damaged and six million others have collapsed (approximately 5.2 million homes damaged and 2 million homes collapsed<sup>3</sup> respectively).

Thousands of aftershocks have been recorded since 12 May. The Sichuan Seismological Bureau on 19 May has warned of the possibility of another aftershock of six to seven on the Richter scale which may occur in the Wenchuan earthquake area in southwest China's Sichuan province between Monday and Tuesday.

<sup>1</sup> In China, a household is calculated according to rooms with one house made up of 3-4 rooms. The government's compensation payments are based on the number of rooms. To date, exact figures have yet to be released by the government.

<sup>2</sup> People who have lost their homes and those who are unable to return to their homes

<sup>3</sup> In China, a household is calculated according to rooms with one house made up of 3-4 rooms. The government's compensation payments are based on the number of rooms. To date, exact figures have yet to be released by the government.

Thousands of residents in Chengdu, still reeling from last week's massive quake, have been leaving their homes and sleeping on the streets or driving to open ground. Hospitals have also evacuated patients in the towns and cities after the warning was broadcasted on television.

In Beichuan, according to government sources, five counties are at high risk, with one of the counties being flooded and over 20,000 people stranded, including 210 tourists.

In Mianyang, around 200,000 displaced people have been sheltered in nearly 100 emergency camps. Out of this number, 50,000 people are sheltered in two big municipal sports centres in Jiuzhou and Nanhe. The other 150,000 people are located in emergency shelter camps in Anixan and Pingwu counties. The number of people in each camp greatly varies from ten inhabitants to 20,000 inhabitants per camp.

Landslides have been occurring due to the aftershocks, blocking roads and railways, as well as resulting in the formation of 18 lakes. According to government reports, more than 158 workers (none from the Red Cross) engaged in emergency relief have been buried by mudslides in Sichuan province. Six vehicles and two construction machines were also buried in the mud.



The RCSC medical team offering care to survivors: In the Sichuan province alone, over 233,000 people have been reported injured. (International Federation)

Mudslides and aftershocks are blocking rivers and the heavy rain has hampered restoration of roads and rescue work in the quake zone. According to the ministry of agriculture, 33,300 hectares of farmland, including more than 10,000 hectares of wheat and rape, and more than 20,000 hectares of vegetables have been damaged in the 13 cities and counties worst hit.

According to the State Council Earthquake Rescue and Relief Headquarters, none of the reservoirs in the earthquake-affected area have collapsed, although many reservoirs, hydropower stations, dams and water locks have been seriously damaged. The ministry of water resources has sent 25 task forces to the affected area to assist local water authorities in inspecting damages and implementing contingency measures. The Wuyi, Fengshou, Yuanmen, Xiangjiagou and Hongqi reservoirs and other smaller reservoirs, embankments and drinking water projects in Shufu and Suijiang counties have sustained some damage.

According to the UNEP in China, two facilities in Shifang city continue to leak sulphuric acid and ammonia due to the aftershocks. The ministry of environmental protection is coordinating the monitoring and control of the impact on-site and has reported that the water quality of nearby Shiting River is so far normal. All nuclear facilities in the earthquake-hit areas are reported as safe and secure.

On 19 May, flags flew at half-mast, all public entertainment was cancelled and 1.3 billion people were asked to observe three minutes of silence as China began three days of mourning for those who died in the massive earthquake. Officials asked that the horns of cars, trains, ships and air raid sirens be sounded as



**Tending to wounds:** the medical centre set up by 30+ doctors from the Hunan provincial Red Cross Society is among a growing number dispatched from areas across China. Sho Huang/International Federation

there are fewer available for the present operation. There is a need for warm clothing, blankets, quilts, food and bottled water to be procured in China. Tents presently remain the most urgent need of all, and are being sourced in the Asia Pacific zone.

#### **Basic health care, water and sanitation**

Communities that suffered massive loss of infrastructure including homes and other buildings have been evacuated and resettled in temporary camps in nearby prefectures and cities. It is unclear at this stage how long these people will stay in these camps. Where possible, many people will return to villages closer to their farms and stay in temporary settlements in the surrounding areas. Others are likely to remain in government-organized temporary camps for several months at least. The health, water and sanitation conditions of these

people fell silent at 14:28 (0628 GMT) exactly one week after the earthquake devastated thousands of buildings and killed an estimated 50,000 people. The Olympic torch relay, a potent symbol of national pride in the countdown to August's much anticipated Beijing games, was also suspended during the mourning period. Trade on China's stock and commodities exchanges was suspended for the three-minute period of silence. China's National Grand Theatre has cancelled or postponed all performances throughout the three days. The mourning period begins as hope of finding more trapped survivors dwindles and preventing hunger and disease among the millions displaced becomes more pressing.

As of 19 May, the government stated that it will provide each person affected by the disaster with half-a-kilogramme of food per day for three months. It is also providing each family with a compensation of CNY 5,000 (CHF 753) for each person who had died as a result of the earthquake. Orphans, the elderly and the mentally and physically disabled who had lost their families will receive CNY 600 (CHF 90) per month for three months.

The government has stated that it will build a DNA database for later identification of bodies. For those who are to be cremated or buried, but who have yet to be identified, medical staff will be keeping DNA samples for testing, to be managed by the police for future identification.

**Relief:** There is a shortage of supply of tents in China due to the large number (4.8 million displaced) of people who have lost their homes. The generosity of the Chinese government in sending 190,000 tents to Myanmar in response to the Cyclone Nargis relief operations means

organized camps are likely to improve soon, as the government moves its focus from search and rescue operations to augmenting local health services, repairing water and sewage infrastructure and providing temporary solutions for displaced people. Depending on the various scenarios above in the coming weeks, the RCSC, with support from the International Federation will identify the best way to support basic health, water and sanitation needs of returnees and displaced people in temporary camps in the affected areas.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Overview

The executive vice-president of the Red Cross Society of China arrived in Chengdu on 19 May and the following day, held a meeting with the International Federation's coordination centre in Chengdu to reinforce the cooperation between the International Federation and RCSC in the Sichuan earthquake relief operations. She thanked the International Federation for its support and said that RCSC national headquarters will coordinate all domestic and international donations, support and relief activity within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in China. Donations and support from International Federation and bilateral donors will be coordinated directly by RCSC headquarters.

On 18 May, RCSC transported milk, instant noodles, drinking water, quilts, torches, raincoats, tents and clothes from its Xi'an warehouse to Sichuan. Meanwhile, more relief items from warehouses in Shanghai, Guangdong, and Yunnan have been mobilized to affected areas in Sichuan, Chongqing, Gansu, Shaanxi, Yunnan and Guizhou provinces. The same day, a batch of in-kind relief items donated from the logistics centre of the Chinese Army to RCSC was transported directly to Sichuan. This batch consisted of cooking units, medical equipment, tents, water purification equipment and generators worth CNY 15 million (CHF 2.3 million). On 19 May, the fourth batch of relief items from RCSC headquarters left Beijing for Chengdu. This batch included ten ambulances, 1,600 heavy duty gloves, 2,400 masks, winter clothes, tents, food and medicines. The items will arrive on 21 May.



Clothing donated by people across China attracts a steady following of women looking for garments to fit their infants, after losing all their possessions in the earthquake. Sho Huang/International Federation

The RCSC, with the support of the ICRC, also seeks to restore family links and provide tracing services to the affected people. A team left Beijing on Monday, 19 May to the affected areas to conduct assessments and focus on sending news to family members.

Continued aftershocks threaten weakened buildings and bring back memories of 12 May for the earthquake survivors and affected population. One of RCSC's psychosocial support teams consisting of 19 people arrived today (20 May) in Chengdu and a second team comprising 24 members will be joining tomorrow (21 May). These teams will start operations in Mianyang prefecture and will train Red Cross volunteers on simple techniques in providing psychosocial support. In turn, the trained volunteers will help affected people to cope with their emotional distress. Approaches adapted to the Chinese culture and customs such as *tai qi* breathing exercises and other methods will be used. These efforts by RCSC will contribute to psychosocial healing and the early recovery of affected communities.

RCSC has appealed within China for donations and supply of tents, 20KW and 40KW diesel oil generators, winter quilts and clothes. The International Federation is considering mobilizing tents from within Asia Pacific as well as other sources outside the region. Feedback from Red Cross medical and first aid teams in the frontline suggests that injured and displaced survivors may need warm clothes and quilts.

With the expected arrival of the German Red Cross' bi-lateral field hospital on 25 May, the RCSC has been liaising with local government and health authorities for site selection and to recruit 100 local doctors, nurses and hospital staff to man the hospital. Two German Red Cross staff will arrive tomorrow (21 May) to do a survey on the availability of water sources and other logistical preparations in advance of the hospital's arrival.

The International Federation's regional office capacity in Beijing has been strengthened, with the International Federation representative in Mongolia and a member of the Asia Pacific zone planning monitoring evaluation and reporting unit both joining the team in Beijing. A logistics delegate from the International Federation's Pakistan country office is also being deployed to China.

### **Coordination and partnerships**

The Chinese government, through its ministry of foreign affairs is taking the lead in coordination of all international organizations responding to this earthquake. Regular consultations are being held between the government and the office of the UN resident coordinator in China.

The RCSC and the International Federation's team has been approached by numerous international organizations, diplomatic missions of foreign governments in China and individuals offering their support in kind, in cash, of personnel, specialized medical teams and volunteers. For the purpose of effective coordination and information sharing, the International Federation's team together with the RCSC has been in regular communications with these agencies through phone calls, e-mails and information sharing meetings.

To date, four international rescue teams sent by the governments of Russia, Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore are working in the field. These teams are working in Qingchuan, Mianzhu and Shifang at this moment, coordinated by the Chinese government.

On the request of the ministry of foreign affairs, the RCSC is coordinating and facilitating the arrival of four relief and medical teams sent by the government of Russia, Germany, Japan and Italy in Chengdu. It will support these teams by liaising with local authorities in setting up operations.

The International Federation's team on the ground has been closely coordinating its activities with other organizations and exchanging their assessment findings and observations. Medecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is carrying out medical and water sanitation assessments. One medical team, including an orthopaedic surgeon and a medical doctor, is supporting a triage referral centre in Guanghan town in the hard-hit prefecture of Deyang. In addition, MSF has donated medicines and medical supplies to this hospital. An additional team of three doctors and two nurses will join their Sichuan team to support township hospitals in providing medical services. MSF donated 20 large-size tents for patients and clinics to each of the two hospitals in Hanwang, Mianzhu city.

## Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

The International Federation's regional office in East Asia is working in partnership with the RCSC's media department to raise media attention and public awareness about the RCSC's response to the earthquake. Currently, a media specialist is working out of the regional office's earthquake operation office in Sichuan to provide timely and accurate information to the public and the media and carry out interviews with international media. The photographer and videographer who documented Red Cross activities have now ended their three-day assignment. The latest updates, including stories, photos, and press releases, are being posted on [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org) daily.

## How we work

***All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.***

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Red Cross Society of China: Mr. Wang Xiaohua, director of external relations department; email: [rcsc@chineseredcross.org](mailto:rcsc@chineseredcross.org); phone: +86.10.6404.8366, fax +86.10.6402.9928.
- East Asia regional office in China: Mr. Carl Naucler, (head of regional office), email; [carl.naucler@ifrc.org](mailto:carl.naucler@ifrc.org); and Mr. Qinghui Gu (regional disaster management coordinator), email; [qinghui.gu@ifrc.org](mailto:qinghui.gu@ifrc.org); phone +86 1391 0959 834, fax+86-10-6532-7166.
- Federation zone office in Kuala Lumpur:
  - Alistair Henley, head of zone office, phone: +6012 203 8254, email: [alistair.henley@ifrc.org](mailto:alistair.henley@ifrc.org),
  - Amy Gaver, acting head of disaster management unit, phone: + 60 3 9207 5700, fax: +60 3 2161 0670, mobile +60 12 220 1174, email: [amy.gaver@ifrc.org](mailto:amy.gaver@ifrc.org)
  - For pledges of funding: Penny Elghady, resource mobilization and PMER coordinator, phone: +603 9207 5775, email: [penny.elghady@ifrc.org](mailto:penny.elghady@ifrc.org)
  - Jeremy Francis, regional logistics coordinator, phone: +60 12 298 9752, fax: +60 3 2168 8573, email: [jeremy.francis@ifrc.org](mailto:jeremy.francis@ifrc.org)
- Federation secretariat in Geneva: Christine South, operations coordinator Asia Pacific, phone: +41 22 730 4529; mobile: +41 79 308 9824; email: [christine.south@ifrc.org](mailto:christine.south@ifrc.org)

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**EMERGENCY APPEAL**

Annex 1

**CHINA: SICHUAN EARTHQUAKE****MDRCN003****RELIEF NEEDS**

Shelter	630,000
Construction Materials	5,000,000
Clothing & Textiles	4,000,000
Food	5,000,000
Water & Sanitation	285,000
Medical & First Aid	740,000
Utensils & Tools	825,000
<b>Total Relief Needs</b>	<b>16,480,000</b>

**CAPITAL EQUIPMENT**

Vehicles Purchase	90,000
Computers & Telecom Equipment	30,000

**TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES**

Storage - Warehouse	-
Distribution & Monitoring	200,000
Transport & Vehicles Costs	100,000

**PERSONNEL**

International Staff	316,800
Regionally Deployed Staff	
National Staff	72,000
National Society Staff	48,000
Consultants/ information	108,000

**WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**

Workshops & Training	50,000
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**GENERAL EXPENSES**

Travel	180,000
Information & Public Relations	36,000
Office running costs	85,200
Communication Costs	78,600
Professional Fees	847,400
Financial Charges	3,000
Other General Expenses	46,445

**PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

Programme Support - PSR	1,304,967
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**Total Operational Needs** **3,596,412**

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**Total Appeal Budget (Cash & Kind)** **20,076,412**

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**Available Resources**

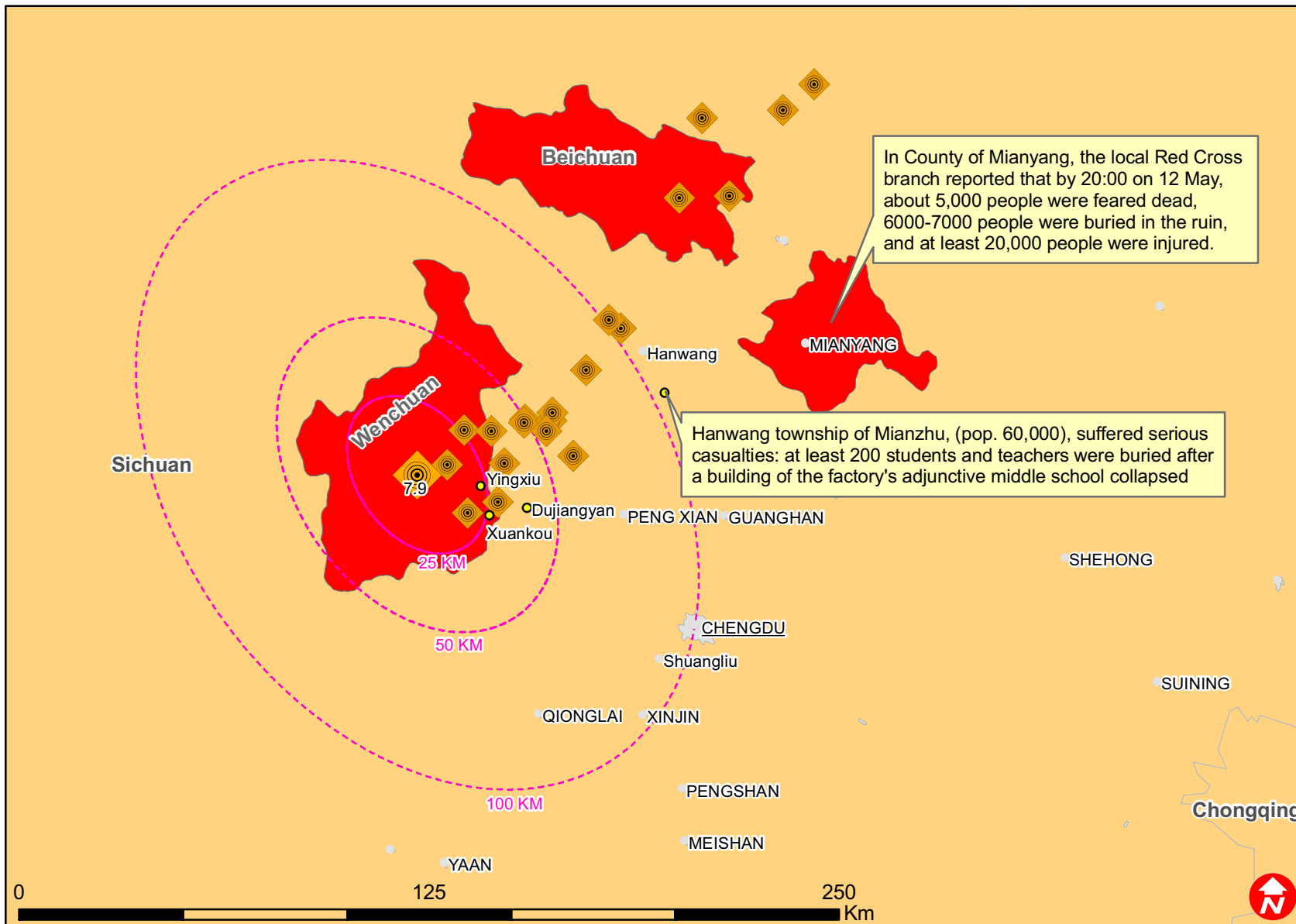
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**Net Request** **20,076,412**

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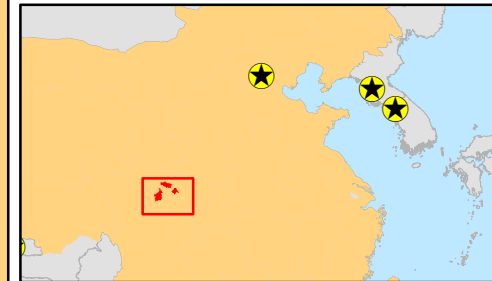


# China: Earthquake



In County of Mianyang, the local Red Cross branch reported that by 20:00 on 12 May, about 5,000 people were feared dead, 6000-7000 people were buried in the ruin, and at least 20,000 people were injured.

Hanwang township of Mianzhu, (pop. 60,000), suffered serious casualties: at least 200 students and teachers were buried after a building of the factory's adjunctive middle school collapsed



- Main earthquake
- Aftershocks
- Most affected counties